

Dear Members of Labor and Public Employees Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Johanna DeBari and I live in Andover, Connecticut. I support Senate Bill No. 1178: An Act Expanding Connecticut Paid Sick Days.

Paid sick time is critical for working families. As a working parent, my two-year-old child is in daycare 5 times a week. When she gets sick, either my husband or I need to stay home with her - missing. Due to safety precautions, my daycare has in place, to keep all of the kids at school safe and reduce the risk of sharing germs (and precautionary for protection from COVID-19), my child has to be fever free for a full 24 hours. Any parent knows that sometimes fevers in small children can last days. There have been instances where I have needed to stay home with my child for 2-3 days in a row. I have the privilege of being able to work from home - and I still needed to use paid sick time to care for my daughter, and my own mental health and well-being. Without paid sick time, I would be losing out on days of income.

Professionally, I was a survivor advocate and sexual violence prevention educator for about a decade. I am incredibly familiar with the toll sexual violence takes on a survivor's mental health and well-being. Community care in supporting survivors is essential - and I see the flexibility of this bill as creating space for chosen family to support survivors is critical.

Overall, I see Paid Sick Days as outlined in this bill as essential to ensuring Connecticut workers, in all industries, have access to the support and care they need to nourish themselves and their loved ones. We need structural support like this in place to resist the grind culture our capitalist society creates.

Thank you for your time,  
Johanna Debari Andover, CT